



ASSOCIATION OF INSPECTORS GENERAL

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December 10, 2024

Honorable Arita Bohannon, Councilwoman District 4

Honorable Hans Liljeberg, Councilman District 5

Dear Councilwoman Bohannon and Councilman Liljeberg:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet virtually yesterday afternoon to discuss the Jefferson Parish Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the proposed amendments to the ordinance governing the Inspector General's authority.

The Association of Inspectors General (AIG) must express again our strong opposition and deep concerns with these proposed amendments. As written, they would fundamentally and permanently diminish the OIG's independence by restricting its ability to communicate publicly, including reporting to the citizens of Jefferson Parish on its work to promote efficiency and combat fraud, waste, and abuse. Public transparency is a cornerstone of an effective Office of Inspector General and limiting it would undermine the OIG's role as an independent watchdog, weaken public trust, and compromise government accountability.

Furthermore, we must underscore the importance of allowing the ongoing investigation by the Jefferson Parish Ethics and Compliance Commission into the actions of the Inspector General to proceed without interference. The Ethics and Compliance Commission, as the oversight body for the OIG, is the appropriate authority to evaluate concerns and ensure accountability. Any efforts to amend the ordinance at this time—before the investigation has concluded—risk prejudicing the process and eroding confidence in the OIG and its oversight and communication mechanisms.

As we discussed in our previous letter and during yesterday's meeting, the AIG Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General clearly emphasize the importance of independence and transparency for all Inspector General offices. This independence is critical for ensuring effective oversight and maintaining public confidence. By rejecting the proposed amendments, the Jefferson Parish Council would uphold these principles and demonstrate a commitment to good governance and accountability.

The AIG, as a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization with deep expertise in these matters, stands ready to assist the Council or provide a more detailed analysis of these issues. We urge you to prioritize preserving the independence of the Jefferson Parish OIG, ensuring it can continue to serve the citizens of Jefferson Parish without undue interference.

Sincerely,



Will Fletcher
President, Association of Inspectors General

- cc. Honorable Scott A. Walker, Council Chairman, Division B
- Honorable Jennifer Van Vrancken, Councilwoman Division A
- Honorable Marion F. Edwards, Councilman District 1
- Honorable Deano Bonano, Vice-Chairman, Councilman, District 2
- Honorable Byron Lee, Councilman District 3
- Jefferson Parish Ethics and Compliance Committee